

**Bryant Library Long Range Plan**  
**2018-2024**

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## INTRODUCTION

### **HISTORY OF THE BRYANT LIBRARY**

**By Carol Clarke, Archivist**

The Bryant Library is recognized today as the oldest continuing library in Nassau County. Although small, private lending libraries had existed in Roslyn as early as 1791, and a school district library had been established by the late nineteenth century, the first mention of what is now “The Bryant Library” can be found in a June 18, 1874 letter penned by noted poet and journalist William Cullen Bryant. Writing from Cedarmere, Bryant anticipates showing his friend “where I am laying the foundations of a Reading Room and Lecture Hall for the village – for the people have no places to meet in the evening save the bar rooms.” This building, constructed the following year, was known as “The Hall” (and later, “Bryant Hall”). Located on Bryant Avenue, the building included space for a library and reading room, as well as a public hall and an apartment for the librarian/caretaker. Records show that one of the earliest community gatherings held at “The Hall” was a “Programme of Exercises” for the village’s July 4, 1876 Centennial Celebration.

Shortly after William Cullen Bryant’s death in June 1878, a group of citizens began making plans to create a library in his memory. At a public meeting held at the Hall on November 13, 1878, the Bryant Circulating Library Association was formed, and in January 1879, Bryant’s daughter, Julia, deeded the property and building to the Association for \$1.00. In addition to selling shares of stock, the association raised money by leasing the building “for reading rooms, public meetings, lectures, concerts, and reputable amusement that is not inconsistent with its use as a public library.” An early advertisement notes that the reading room was open to the public daily (except Sundays and holidays) for reading newspapers and other periodicals. Stockholders and subscribers who paid an annual fee could borrow books on Wednesday and Saturday evenings. In 1901 Mrs. Katherine Mackay provided funds to improve the library. In addition to physical improvements to the reading room, she purchased new books and hired Pratt Institute-trained librarians to catalog the collection. One of the librarians stated in the local newspaper that “it was the most complete and well selected country library she had ever seen.”

Use of the Bryant Hall library waned in succeeding decades. By 1924, the trustees of the Roslyn Circulating Library Association were having a hard time maintaining the building and operating the library. At the same time, the circulating library organized by the Roslyn Neighborhood Association in 1917 had outgrown its space at the Neighborhood House (Valentine House) on Paper Mill Road, and recognized that Bryant Hall provided “a reading room far superior to those we have in the Neighborhood House.” The trustees of the two associations voted to merge the two libraries, and the library reorganized under the name “Bryant Library” in 1924. The library was open to the public every afternoon from 3-5 pm and Thursday evenings from 7-9 pm, with a children’s story hour each Friday at 3 pm. The Bryant Library grew and served the community in its Bryant Avenue location for close to 70 years. In 1945 it received a provisional charter from the New York State Board of Regents to provide library services to any resident of Roslyn School District #3. An absolute charter was granted in 1950.

In 1946, Bryant Hall was condemned and demolished by New York State to make way for a bridge over Hempstead Harbor. While the Library Board and residents debated the best location for a new library building, library services were provided first at the storefront branch library that had opened in Roslyn Heights in early 1946 and later in the former Roslyn Heights Post Office building. In 1951, after considering several locations, including a former harness shop on Main Street, the trustees of the Bryant Circulating Library Association accepted the Roslyn Neighborhood Association's donation of the Roslyn War Memorial Building on East Broadway. Designed by Frederick M. Godwin, great-grandson of William Cullen Bryant, the War Memorial Building was dedicated in 1921 as a memorial to Roslyn soldiers who fought in World War I. It served as a community center for Roslyn residents. In addition to housing a rifle range, bowling alley, pool tables and basketball court, spaces were rented to local organizations for plays, dances and other entertainments. The building was remodeled in 1935 as a 500-seat playhouse. Between 1935 and 1939 it was known as the Theatre of the Four Seasons. For several years in the early 1940s it was known as the Millpond Playhouse.

The Bryant Library opened in its new home in March 1952. Increased circulation was accommodated by the gift from the Hempstead Public Library of a circulation desk "especially arranged for the quick and efficient charging of books" and by acquisition of an electric charging machine. In 1953, the library sponsored "Old Roslyn Day" to raise funds for bookcases and other improvements. During that same year, the Local History Collection was established with a donation of books and documents from the Grist Mill Historical Society, a music section was started following a resident's donation of record albums, and children's and adult education programs, including a Great Book discussion group, began.

Roslyn experienced an increase in population of 65% between 1950 and 1955. To accommodate increased usage, the library underwent both physical and operational changes. Additional alterations to the building were made in 1956, including structural work to strengthen the foundation and make the basement usable. This resulted in removal of the terrace and balustrade that originally fronted the building, but allowed for creation of book stacks and a Children's Room in the basement. The Bryant Memorial Reading Room, which also housed the Reference department, opened to the public in 1957. There is evidence of controversy surrounded some other changes, including replacement of volunteers with paid staff, and weeding of outdated nonfiction titles. The Bryant Library joined the Nassau Library System in 1960, providing patrons with access to specialized reference collections and interlibrary loan. The library's offerings of exhibits, film showings and young adult programs increased in the 1960s.

After two years of investigating ways to expand the library, public hearings started in early 1966 regarding construction of a new library building. Since government funding was not available for expansion of the library building, the Board proposed constructing a new building on library-owned land on the south side of Paper Mill Road (site of tennis courts). The War Memorial Building would be demolished and the site used for parking. Controversy ensued as residents took sides over whether to preserve the Memorial Building as a library or build a new library, and whether the Bryant Library's legal status should be changed from a free association library to a public/school district library. Following defeat of the proposal to construct a new building,

the board established a citizen's advisory committee and retained a professional library building consultant to reassess solutions to the existing problem of "crowded aisles, insufficient seating, parking problems and an undesirably high noise level." In 1967, the board of the Bryant Library Association announced its decision to maintain its legal status as a free association library, amending its by-laws to eliminate the \$1 membership fee. It also proposed that the Valentine House, which had served as Roslyn Village Hall since 1962, be moved across Paper Mill Road to enable construction of a two-story 10,000 square foot addition on the west side of the War Memorial Building. Construction of the extension was approved by voters in October 1967. The Valentine House was moved and groundbreaking for the expansion took place in November 1968. The new building opened in January 1970 with an expanded adult reading room on the middle level, a meeting room on the upper level and a new children's room on the lower level.

The Bryant Library continues to serve the residents of School District #3 and beyond, offering extensive programming for adults, young adults and children, providing patrons with the latest in information technology, and facilitating research into the history of the greater Roslyn area through the Bryant Library Local History Collection.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

In keeping with the tradition of the American library, the Bryant Library Board of Trustees affirms that an informed community values its intellectual freedoms and respects and tolerates diverse ideas and opinions.

The mission of the Bryant Library shall be to provide our community with access to ideas and to promote lifelong reading for pleasure and for knowledge by providing classic and popular literature in a variety of formats. The library is committed to providing materials and services sufficient to meet the personal, educational, and professional needs of community residents of all ages.

The Board of Trustees further recognizes the community's desire to maintain the special character of the Bryant Library. At the same time we seek to provide a setting suitable for the efficient use of the materials and services offered.

### **VISION STATEMENT**

The Bryant Library is a place where the community's varied interests are represented and the need for information is met.

### **PHILOSOPHY OF SERVICE**

The Bryant Library is committed to providing quality library service. To aid in achieving this, the Library embraces the following philosophies:

- The Bryant Library is committed to intellectual freedom. Individuals are responsible for making their own choices regarding appropriateness of materials, and parents/guardians are responsible for the choices they make for their children within the limits of the law.
- The Bryant Library respects diversity and seeks to represent diversity in its collections, programs, services, and staff.
- The Bryant Library is committed to supporting formal education and fostering lifelong learning.
- The Bryant Library is committed to providing library services cost effectively.
- The Bryant Library views technology as a means to achieve greater accessibility to information and to provide effective service. The Library is committed to providing training and educational opportunities in the use of these new technologies.
- The Bryant Library is committed to maintaining and developing cooperative relationships and partnerships with community organizations.

## **EXISTING SERVICES**

To fulfill its mission and support and enhance its core values, the Library has developed a plan of service for all ages that includes, but is not limited to:

- Age-specific services
- Diversity
- Customer service
- Business and career information
- Community meeting space
- Consumer information
- Computer literacy
- Cultural, recreational and educational programs
- Formal learning support
- General information
- Government information
- Homebound delivery services
- Information about popular culture and trends
- Information and referral
- Information literacy
- Lifelong learning
- Local history
- Multi-language resources
- Outreach
- Public access computers
- Recreational materials
- Remote access to library resources
- Research assistance
- Resources for basic literacy
- Technology

## **GOALS**

**Access & Outreach**

**Staffing**

**Collection**

**Finance**

**Facilities**

**Collection**

**Customer Service**

## **Access & Outreach**

### **LIFELONG LEARNING**

The Library will enhance existing services and develop new ways of supporting self-directed personal growth and development opportunities by:

- Continuing to update resources to meet the informational needs of the diverse populations within the community.
- Providing group and individual training in electronic services and basic computer skills.
- Supplementing and complementing print and non-print collections with electronic resources.
  - Providing remote access to the Library's resources.
  - Continuing to expand the adult learner collection and services.
  - Providing opportunities that encourage the development of life-long library users.

### **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

The Library will continue to reach out to the community through activities such as:

- Working with the Roslyn Public Schools
- Membership in community organizations such as Rotary and the Chamber of Commerce.
- Encourage civic associations to use the library facilities for their meetings and programs.
- Maintain contact with local government officials.
- Offer offsite programs when possible.
- Strengthen the Library's commitment to public relations and marketing efforts.
- According to ALA "Trustees play an integral role in advocacy for their library. The quality of a library's services ultimately rests with the library's Board of Trustees and, therefore, it is critically important that they do everything they can to ensure that the library has the resources it needs. Trustees can be powerful advocates for their library. If libraries are to thrive in the 21st century, Trustees must step up and let those who fund them know that communities and even our democracy depend on free and open access to the wide variety of materials and resources an excellent library with excellent funding offers."
- Partner with local institutions to provide programs and services to a diverse population.

### **PATRON AWARENESS**

1. The Library will continue to develop and implement outreach services designed to bring in new patrons and inform our current library patrons of programs and services:
  - Developing Library information in languages other than English to communicate with a diversified community.
  - Continue to conduct tours of the Library and if so, make the tour bilingual.
  - Continue to review our foreign language print and non-print collection.

- Conducting periodic surveys of changes in the community to determine patron needs
2. The Library will develop services and programs for patrons with disabilities by:
    - Providing access to resources with adaptive technology.
    - Maintaining services for the homebound.
    - Providing appropriate accommodations for all.
  3. The Library will develop and market programs and services to remote users by:
    - Improving access to the Library's website.
    - Improving the ease of use of the Library's website.
    - Exploring the possibility of offering on-line library card sign-up, program sign up, registration payment, and e-mail notification of new materials.
    - Expanding the selection of online databases that are available remotely.
    - Updating and expanding Library-developed web pages.
    - Utilize social media to maximize program attendance to a diverse community.
  4. The Library will continue to meet the needs of our senior population by:
    - Providing programs for lifelong learning.
    - Partnering with local senior organizations to provide senior services.

### **FORMAL LEARNING SUPPORT**

The Library will support the educational goals of the Roslyn Public Schools by:

- Purchasing materials to support school curriculum.
- Maintaining print and non-print resources for home schooling.
- Supporting live, real-time reference service and homework help.
- Maintaining and developing contact with school media specialists, literacy providers, and other educational professionals.
- Visiting area schools.
- Exploring the development of collaborative online links for the exchange of school assignments and information.
- Participating in PTA meetings.
- Providing resources for educational professionals.

### **INTERLIBRARY COOPERATION**

The Library will continue its leadership role by:

- Continuing to work closely with our system libraries to improve service.
- Share materials, expertise and costs.
- Cooperative projects.

- Continue to utilize the resources provided by NLS.

### **Staffing**

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES**

The Library will maintain the quality of service delivered to the community by:

- Recruiting quality staff.
- Improve communication among departments.
- Provide continuing education for both staff and trustees to help them understand duties.
- Foster participation in professional organizations.
- Review and update Library policies.
- Institute the Library's Employee Recognition program.

### **Finance**

#### **ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

The Library will continue to explore new sources of non-tax-based financial support such as:

- Applying for grant funding.
- Working with Friends of Bryant Library.

### **Facilities**

#### **FACILITIES PLANNING**

In order to meet the needs of our expanding and changing community and to provide library service as effectively as possible, the Library will:

- Explore the need to redesign the Library's main floor.
- Plan and budget for technology upgrades and improvements.
- Review and update Library policies.
- Explore ways to address maintenance and cleaning practices.
- Plan and budget for furniture upgrades and improvements.
- Continue to follow the recommendations for repairs from the Library's initial 5 year facilities plan.

#### **FACILITY GOALS**

- Removal of old carpet and install new carpet on main floor.
- Renovate older restrooms.
- Paint exterior and interior of building.
- Secure more study space and separate areas for patrons to have a light snack

- Open a makerspace that will allow teens to explore their creativity. The space will include an area for teens to communicate, read, play board games, work on the computer, and create items with 3-D printers.
- Fix frames around windows.
- Replace cracked glass in windows in children's room.
- Reevaluate use of RFID.
- Replace carpeting in children's room.
- Redesign of main floor space that includes new book shelves that allow for easier use, a smaller reference desk, more comfortable seating, game tables (chess, checkers), and removal of circulation desk.
- Add more electrical outlets on main floor to handle patron usage of electronic devices.
- Maintain landscaping.
- Replace kitchen outside Helen Glannon Room.
- Continue to address issues brought out in the original five year building plan.
- Wireless printing for the public.

### **Collection**

- The Bryant Library collects materials, in a variety of popular formats, which support its function as an information hub and community center. The collection also serves the popular and recreational needs of the Roslyn community, and reflects the racial, ethnic and cultural diversity of the community. Customer use is the most powerful influence on the Library's collection. Circulation, customer purchase requests and hold levels are all closely monitored, triggering the purchase of new items and additional copies of high demand items. In addition to customer demand, selections are made to provide depth and diversity of viewpoints to the existing collection and to maintain what is currently the largest local history collection in Nassau County.
- Inherent in the collection development philosophy is an appreciation for each customer of The Bryant Library. The Library provides materials to support each individual's journey, and does not place a value on one customer's needs or preferences over another's. The Library upholds the right of the individual to access information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox or unacceptable to others.
- Materials for children and teenagers are intended to broaden their vision, support recreational reading, encourage and facilitate reading skills, supplement their educational needs, stimulate and widen their interests, lead to recognition and appreciation of literature and reflect the diversity of the community. The reading and viewing activity of children is ultimately the responsibility of parents, who guide and oversee their own children's development. The Bryant Library does not intrude on that relationship.
- See the Library's Collection Development Policy for more information.

**Customer Service**

- Provide excellence in customer service to meet the needs of all community members.
- Meet with community and school leaders to continue with beneficial partnerships.
- Continue to train staff to provide quality customer service.
- Recognize the diversity of the community the Library serves in order for all residents to receive the same excellence in customer service.
- Conduct surveys to focus on the needs of the community.

## APPENDIX

### Bryant Library Technology Plan

#### **Mission Statement:**

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#### **Technology:**

The Library will avail itself of all forms of information and entertainment resources, including print, non-print and electronic to better serve the public. This plan addresses the technology and electronic element in the furtherance of our mission.

#### **Telecommunications:**

The Library aims to provide the community with the telecommunications framework necessary to identify and obtain information electronically from both home and at the Library.

**Resource Sharing:** The Library collaborates with the Nassau Library System and the other libraries in Nassau County to offer access to technologies and a streamlined sharing of holdings and resources.

**Internet:** The Library offers access to the Internet, and assists users with finding, using and evaluating information online.

**Computer and Technology Literacy:** The Library supports the community's need to develop computer and technology literacy through classes and the assistance of a trained staff.

**Public Computer Availability:** The Library makes computer hardware and software available to the public.

**ADA Access:** The Library aims to provide the same level of electronic access is available to people with disabilities through the provision of assistive technologies and a staff skilled in its use.

## **Infrastructure Objectives**

### **Staff Training:**

The Library staff is well trained and experienced in using and assisting users with the technology available. This is accomplished through classes, workshops, training, access to computers and other technologies and an institutional philosophy that encourages independent exploration and skill development.

### **Bandwidth:**

To maintain and expend as necessary the appropriate bandwidth required to satisfy access to online resources and other shared networks. Our current bandwidth needs are sufficient, but will be monitored over the plan's period.

### **Technology:**

To maintain an inventory of all Bryant Library technology to be used in evaluating the currency and scope of the Library's technological holdings. The Library is committed to having the technology necessary to offer the public access to the services and information that it needs. Our current inventory consists of:

- 20 public access computers
- 40 staff computers
- 10 iPads
- 27 tablets
- 10 laptops
- 2 3-D printers
- 5 public printers
- 15 staff printers

Anticipated changes would be the subtraction of public access computers to allow for more usage of laptops.

**Telecommunications:** To maintain an inventory of all Bryant Library telecommunications hardware to be used in evaluating the currency and scope of the library's telecommunications capacity. The Library is committed to having the telecommunications capacity necessary to offer the public access to the services and information that it needs.

**Training:** To develop and implement a technology education program for staff and patrons at the Library.

**Evaluation:** To monitor the Library's technological accomplishments and to do a periodic written evaluation of the library's technological status.

## **Bryant Library Social Media Strategy Plan**

The Bryant Library utilizes social media tools to provide a limited (or designated) public forum to facilitate the sharing of ideas, opinions and information about Bryant Library related subjects and issues.

Social media is defined as forms of electronic communication (as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos). As of today The Bryant Library maintains a website ([www.bryantlibrary.org](http://www.bryantlibrary.org)) as well as a presence on Facebook and Twitter. The Bryant Library sends out communications through email blasts in order to reach large segments of the population we serve.

The Bryant Library encourages an open forum with posts and comments moderated by Bryant staff. The Bryant Library reserves the right, within its sole discretion, not to post and to remove submissions or comments that are unlawful or violate this policy.

### **Rules for Commenting and Posting**

- Posting offensive, obscene, threatening or abusive content is strictly prohibited. The Library will remove comments that contain abusive, vulgar, offensive, threatening or harassing language, personal attacks of any kind, or offensive terms that target specific individuals or groups. Individuals are fully responsible for libelous or defamatory comments.
- Hate-speech will not be tolerated. Posts containing racism, homophobia, sexism, or any other form of hate-speech will be removed from the Library's site.
- Don't include personal information. The Library strongly discourages individuals, especially people under the age of 18, from posting personal information about themselves (ex. last names, school, age, phone numbers, addresses, etc.), and reserves the right to remove any posts with personal information about other people or that violate a third party's right to privacy.
- Stay on topic. Comments and posts should be related to the issue or topic discussed.
- Duplicate posts from the same individual are discouraged.
- Spam and commercial content will be removed. The Library will remove posts or comments used for political and commercial purposes or for soliciting funds. Gratuitous links to sites are viewed as spam and will result in the comment being removed.
- Copyright Violations. Individuals should not post anything that they do not have the right to post. The Library follows a notice and takedown procedure for complaints of copyright violation under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.
- The Library is not responsible for any of the patron-generated comments/content that appear on the website(s). A posted comment is the opinion of the poster only, and publication of a comment does not imply endorsement or agreement by The Bryant Library.
- Users may report concerns. Moderators will endeavor to review those concerns as soon as possible. In some instances, we will not have the resources to review user comments and

posts, but we do reserve the right to edit or delete user comments and posts in a manner consistent with our mission and policies. The Library will not remove all posts that have been reported and the Library cannot respond individually to every report.

## **Social Media Strategy**

The Bryant Library's use of social media outlets should:

- Aim to inform patrons who do not, or cannot, visit the physical library of its services and events
- Make active patrons aware of the library's virtual presence, its services and events
- Attract non-active and new patrons to visit both the physical and virtual library in order to take advantage of services and events
- Increase community awareness of the library
- The Bryant Library will periodically review the social media outlets utilized and:
  1. update its goals to support library planning and evolution
  2. add new channels in order to meet the demand of our community
  3. keep or scrap current media channels as is relevant with evolving technology

### **Facebook**

Daily posts should be made to the Library's Facebook page in order to keep it active and entice patrons to return to it. The Facebook page should:

- Promote upcoming Library events.
- Contain a link to the Library website and newsletter.
- Share Library news including new services, special closings and holiday hours.
- Promote online services.
- Post occasional outside links to relevant author/book/library/tech related subjects.

### **Twitter**

- Promote library events.

### **Pinterest**

- Private boards which could include Staff Picks, Hot off the Press and various Librarian Lists.

### **Instagram**

- Promote collections by posting photos
- Promote upcoming Library events.
- Engage community by posting photos taken at Library events

### **Youtube**

- Develop a Youtube channel to post videos of library events and programs.
- In the future, Library tutorials could be shown for online library services.

The Director of Public Relations will supervise all social media outlets. Each department will appoint a staff liaison to work with the Public Relations Department to make sure that all information presented to the public is uniform in message and accuracy.